

**From:** cpurdy@web-ster.com  
**To:** [SWF Exhibits](#)  
**Subject:** SB560 PERS reform bill  
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Chair Taylor and Members of the Committee on Workforce,

My name is Christine Purdy, I am a 26 year employee of the Department of Human Service/Oregon Health Authority. I started my state career as a Lab Technician at the State Hospital in Salem and now currently am a Data Analyst. DHS/OHA provide vital services to the most needy Oregonians including TANF, SNAP, Mental Health, Home Health Care, Vocational Rehabilitation training just to name a few.

I am asking the Workforce Committee to consider the employees who have given their career to provide services to Oregonians with the promise of recognition of our service at retirement.

Personally, if this bill passes it could put me in financial distress in my retirement. I am a single mom, I am proud to say I raised my children without using services from the state. I did this by utilizing the equity in my home with the knowledge my retirement would not be jeopardized and I could accommodate this financial burden. If this bill proceeds I could lose my home and with the rising cost of housing in Oregon I could be forced into low income housing as well as becoming a member of the community utilizing the very services I help provide. This is ingratitude for the years of service I have given.

It would be unjust to rest the resolution of the PERS shortfall on the backs of individual state employees.

There is an answer for the PERS shortfall and I do not pretend to have

the answer but I do have some questions.

I question the tax structure for businesses, mainly big business. How fair is the business tax structure compared to the tax structure for the working class? I question why the PERS system has become the pot to pick from. State employees are not merely coins in a pot, we are people, young people just starting out wanting to create a self-supporting life, we have kids who want to go to college, we have grand-kids, we have financial responsibilities and we have a dream of a satisfying retirement after years of service.

Frequently, I read comments after a news story on PERS that state employees “have it so good” or even hear that from private sector employees. We are the employees who see the worst, who deal with hostile situations, who see children scared and hurt. We are the employees who help adults pick up the pieces when they have hit rock bottom due to financial crisis or abuse. We are the employees who provide direct care to those who cannot help themselves. And yet, we do this at a pay rate that is, for the majority, less than the private sector. These are not glamorous jobs but we care enough to do them, day after day, year after year.

Instead of picking at the current retirement, which employees have been promised and believe will be there throughout their career, create a new retirement for future employees. This would allow future employees to plan accordingly for their retirement based on the understanding of what the new, limited retirement offer is in their employment package.

Finally, let me add, if this bill continues it will show both current and future state employees that their service will not be appreciated and

there is no guarantee in promises made by the state. If this bill passes I fear for the state services and the burden it could face due to the number of future retirees who will be forced to utilize them. If this bill passes I fear for future recruitments to fill vacant positions and the impact that could have on the delivery of services to those in need.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Christine Purdy